

"Every day, as long as this 'today' lasts,
keep encouraging one another" (Heb 3:13)

**2nd Sunday of Easter
April 7 2024
Readings p. 262**

Acts 5:12-16

In spite of the dangers, people came to believe in the Lord. Through the ministry of the disciples, the Church began to grow.

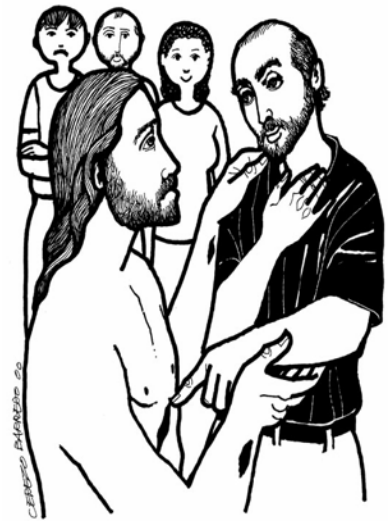
Apocalypse 1:9-13. 17-19

John is in exile for witnessing to Christ. He begins to record his visions.

St. John 20:19-31

The risen Christ is not constrained by walls, and can break down the barriers of scepticism in the human heart.

Thomas
replied,
'My Lord
and my
God!'



It's perfectly understandable: Thomas is having trouble believing that Jesus has returned to be with his friends again. The disciples, who witnessed Jesus' arrest, torture, death and burial, are now talking about having seen Jesus in the flesh again. It sounds impossible. Thomas was not there when Jesus first appeared to the disciples, so of course he is doubtful.

Thomas' moment of doubt earned him the nickname 'Doubting Thomas', and I sometimes think this is a little unfair. Or rather, I feel that Thomas' wobble of faith does not necessarily cast him in a negative light – it makes him easier to relate to. He is grieving after the death of his master and friend. He is not ready to hear the words of comfort and consolation offered by the others, when they tell him 'We have seen the Lord.' His pain is too deep. He can't believe it, or won't believe it, until he experiences it for himself. And when he does finally encounter Jesus, an agonising eight days later, his declaration of faith is swift: 'My Lord and my God!' We can almost hear the relief and joy in this exclamation.

We all know that life can be painful and messy at times. It can be hard to hang onto our faith when we are in pain, or grieving, or anxious. It might be difficult to accept the assurances of others that God is with us and will help us through it. We might also struggle to pray. In dark times, sometimes we just can't see the light. Thomas is a saint for those times of darkness and doubt. In our darkest days, may we, like Thomas, encounter the healing presence of the Risen Christ. **Triona Doherty**

**Today's Psalm
Psalm 117**

The sons of Israel were the whole nation of believers.

The sons of Aaron were the clergy of the day.

Those who feared the Lord were outsiders who had come to share their faith in God. All are called to proclaim that his love has no end.

It seemed, in the darkness of Calvary, that evil had silenced the good news, that hatred had choked the life out of love, and that death had claimed the ultimate prize. All of us have experienced moments of Calvary darkness and feelings of rejection.

Then, through closed doors, into the room of fear comes the Risen Lord, our Saviour.

He shows the wounds of rejection but his greeting is full of peace and his very breath bestows the Spirit of forgiveness and divine love.

The rejected stone becomes the keystone holding all the parts together. The disciples are bonded into a living community of caring and sharing. The power of the Lord is seen in miracles of healing.

*Give thanks to the Lord,
for his love has no end.*

Fr. Silvester O'Flynn OFM Cap.

St. Mary's Catholic Church, Euxton - Tel: (01257) 262665

Mass Intentions for w/c Sunday April 24 2024

Sun:	2nd Sunday of Easter
8.30.am.	Parishioners
10.30.am.	Special Intention (MP)

Mon: **The Annunciation of the Lord**

9.30.am. Rev Thomas Keeley

Tues: Weekday of Eastster

9.30.am: Monica Preston

Wed: Weekday of Easter

9.30.am: Vera Melia

Thurs.: **No Mass Today**

Fri: Weekday of Easter

7.00.pm. Private Intention

Sun:	3rd Sunday of Easter
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8.30.am. Parishioners

10.30am. Special Intention (MP)

0771 942 7926 (only for emergency use)

Confessions

At your request

On Admittance to Hospital or Nursing Home

Staff need to be made aware by you: that you, or the member of your family, or the person you accompany, are Catholic, and require the services of the Catholic Chaplaincy.

Cemetery

All visitors are asked to help keep the Cemetery tidy and to use the appropriate waste bins. We are coming into the grass cutting season in the cemetery and Church grounds. Can you help?

If you can help please contact Nick Fish, or any of the regular grass cutters

Masses Received

Mary Gallagher 5/7

Desmond Gorman 5/7

We pray for all the sick of the parish. including Ryan Troop; Catherine Thompson; Thomas Halligin;; Wiliam(Bill) Drinkwater.

Divine Mercy today Sunday 300pm. Sacred Heart, Brooke Street.

What does God's mercy actually mean? Perhaps there's a banana skin that follows you through your life! A sin or a weakness that trips you up time and time again. Perhaps it's something in your life that you've given up trying to change. Today is Divine Mercy Sunday.

On this day we are reminded that there is no sin so great that God cannot forgive.

We may have put our own weaknesses to the back of our minds, but today is an invitation to put all our troubles before God.

With A

UK general election due to take place in 2024, politicians are looking for our votes – and will be listening to what voters want. As Catholics, we have a responsibility to make sure political parties commit to tackle the injustices that affect our global family and to care for our common home. CAFOD has launched an information page to share resources as the election draws closer. You can find this at

www.cafod.org.uk/campaign/latest-campaigns/uk-general-electio.nail **Activ** for April

Growing your own food is nowhere near as complicated or time-consuming as it sounds, and it'll eliminate the Yeti-sized carbon footprint of all those refrigerated trucks and planes importing berries from South America. Cherry tomatoes, salad greens, and green beans are the best foods to grow if you haven't done this before. For those of us who don't have a garden, simply growing herbs on a windowsill can be very fulfilling.

commitments and support agricultural systems that tackle the climate crisis and put local communities first.

“Every tomorrow has two handles. We can take hold of it by the handle of anxiety, or by the handle of faith.” Author Unknown